

THE VEHICULAR HOMICIDE

of

DEIDRE WEEK:

A CASE STUDY

TO: Wood County District Attorney
Wisconsin Attorney General
Wisconsin Department of Criminal Investigation

An exhaustive study of the 2,067 pages of documents acquired by the Week's family from the Wood County Police in late May 2001 for payment of over \$600, regarding the incident on March 24, 1995 that resulted in the death of their young daughter Deidre, has been conducted. Approximately 500 hours of research has gone into this project.

Major conclusions reached are as follows:

#1 While there are other possibilities/suspects (i.e. Scott Carolfi, Carmen Gruetzmacher, other Vruwink family members), there appears to be a strong circumstantial case that indicates Tom Vruwink and Roger Yenter were the two people in the car that hit Deidre Week, and thus were the perpetrators of the crime.

#2. That they were both intoxicated at the time and thus the crime was vehicular homicide.

#3. That the sole eye witness, Jim Vruwink, Jr. was aware of who was involved and orchestrated a cover-up that continues to this day.

#4. That the work of the Wood County Sheriffs' department was poorly done and compromised in large part due to a very close personal relationship between the Vruwinks and the then Wood County Sheriff, Brian Illingworth.

#5 Related to this, a circumstantial case can be made the former sheriff discussed this case with the Vruwinks and thus compromised the work of his department. Also related to this, it should be noted, the relationship between the Vruwinks and Illingworth continues to this day, and that it would be reasonable to conclude that the ex-sheriff has knowledge of the role the Vruwinks played in this crime.

With these major conclusions, it is the opinion here that a John Doe probe involving this crime is warranted and should be commenced as soon as the Wood County District Attorney has had a chance to review this document, and the supporting documentation. It is also strongly held that their should be oversight provided by the State Attorney General's Office due to potential conflict of interests within the Wood County D. A.'s office, the Wood County Sheriff's Department, and with local judges.

We will now lay out the case to support these statements and conclusions.

Deidre Week was killed on March 24, 1995 when the bicycle she was riding was struck by a car that did not stop. All accounts have four people at the scene of the crime. Deidre, the eye witness Jim Vruwink Jr., and two males who were in the striking vehicle. The assertion here is that those two males were Thomas J. Vruwink, and Roger J. Yenter.

It can be factually documented that Thomas Vruwink and Roger J. Yenter worked together at the then Consolidated Papers and that they on March 24, 1995 clocked out together early (noon) from their shift. (1)

It can further be proven that they stayed together after leaving work. Yenter in a September 8, 1997 interview conducted by John Rehrauer from D.C.I. is quoted as follows.

"He (Roger J. Yenter) recalled when they left Consolidated they went up Highway 10 West through Junction City and rode around, the area by Arpin. He related Vruwink showed him where his parents and some of his relatives lived while they rode around. (2)

Rehrauer proceeds in that interview to have Yenter say they (Yenter and Tom Vruwink) went to Jim Vruwink's residence (his brother) to find Jim, but that he wasn't there. (3) After that they proceeded on to JoJo's Bar in Vesper, Wisconsin where they had a few drinks. (4) Thomas J. Vruwink had previously confirmed this stop at JoJo's in a June 1, 1995 interview conducted by Wood County Officer Thomas Reichert. (5)

It should be noted that in 1995 Jim Vruwink's home was also the address for a business jointly owned by Jim and Tom Vruwink known as T. J.'s Auto and Collision Repair, Inc.

Jim Vruwink's activities the afternoon of March 24, 1995 are not fully known. In a December 10, 1996 interview conducted by Mr. Rehrauer he stated:

"...prior to the sale of the Oldsmobile Cutlass to Frahm's on March 24, 1995 he believed he had picked up his children from his parents house but wasn't positive. He explained normally this was where his children were when he picked them up from his ex-wife for visitation. (6)

A close examination of virtually all of Jim Vruwink's statements regarding this case shows what he says is in dispute or changes subtly or dramatically from interview to interview.

In this case Jim's ex-wife Kim Kosik had a dramatically different recollection of that afternoon. A January 24, 1996 interview by Mr. Rehrauer says as follows:

"Ms. Kosik stated on March 24, 1995 at about 5:10 p.m. James Vruwink came to pick up _____ and _____ (names blacked out) for the weekend at her home in Pittsville, Wisconsin" (7)

Ms. Kosik's memories are very complete down to the clothes her ex-husband was wearing. (8) In addition it is noted in the report that Ms. Kosik documents what the children tell her after a visit with her ex-husband, and in this case she provides significant examples of how detailed her written reports are (9)

Clearly Ms. Kosik's recollections are more clear and documented than Mr. Jim Vruwink's with regard to his activities on March 24, 1995. In fact, she has him moving cars with their daughter after dropping off the son (10) This activity came be corroborated by other parties most notably the Frahm's, the couple who purchased a car from Jim Vruwink right before the homicide and who were referred to in Jim's previously noted recollections.

We now move to the critical time frame -5:00 to 7:00 p.m. on Friday, March 24, 1995. Deidre Week takes her bike and rides into town for 4-H play practice at the beginning of this time frame. Jim Vruwink is picking his children up for visitation at about the same time. Tom Vruwink and Roger Yenter have been joy riding and are at JoJo's Bar in Vesper. (11)

Play practice for the young 4-Hers broke up around 6:15 or 6:20 p.m. Virginia Brock notes this when she says she picked up her children from play practice "... around 6:15 to 6:20 p.m." (12)

Ms. Brock, while she didn't see Deidre Week, places her after that practice at Winch's Oil in Vesper. She recalls being "... told by her children that Deidre Week had went into the laundromat portion of Winch's (13) This occurred when Ms. Brock and her children were at Winch's fueling up her Dodge Caravan.

Furthermore this recollection is corroborated by Cathie Austin who worked at Winch's Oil that day. There is significant confusion on Ms. Austin's part as to the time frame etc., however she clearly remembers Deidre Week buying two suckers and putting them in a brown paper bag for her (14)

The recollection is solid in that Tom Reichert of the Wood County Police notes, "These items were consistent with what we recovered at the scene of the accident". [15] Since we know Deidre was at play practice until 6:15 or 6:20, Ms. Austin's confusion as to time can be attributed to just that confusion. She herself notes that "...she did not have a very good memory." [16] The time had to be between 6:20 and 6:30 p.m. and the items purchased were later accounted for. Thus we know Deidre's whereabouts between 5:00 and 6:30 p.m. At around 6:30 p.m. she left Winch's to go home.

As for Jim Vruwink, as previously noted he picked up his two children at 5:10 p.m. After dropping his son Zach off he proceeded to start "...moving cars back and forth between Vesper." His daughter Brittany was along with him. [17]

Since it would, according to Ms. Kosik, take him 20 - 25 minutes to get him from where he picked the children up to his place we know this activity occurred between 5:30 and 6:30 p.m. [18] One car that was moved was a 1987 gray two-door Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme purchased that evening by David and Julie Frahm.

We have a very complete description of that transaction from the Frahm's. [19] The Frahm's recollection of that transaction is extremely precise. It includes them arriving in the Vesper area at 5:55 p.m., getting to Winch's for a previously arranged 6:00 p.m. appointment, finding the car they were interested in and the owner of it not there for the appointment, waiting ten minutes and then calling, reaching a 'gentlemen' on that call who said the guy had just left, the guy arriving about ten minutes later with a young blonde haired girl, "...who had on a sweatshirt which was much too large." [20] This would be James Vruwink Jr. and his daughter Brittany.

The Frahm's go on in great detail to describe consummating the deal and getting Jim Vruwink to go get a missing chrome trim piece. [21]

Thus between 6:00 and 6:30 p.m. on March 24, 1995 Jim Vruwink Jr. is with his daughter Brittany between his house and Vesper and back. There can be little question of that.

Having said that an interview conducted by John Rehrauer with Jim Vruwink's hired man Lonnie Grosskreutz on January 24, 1996 certainly attempted to muddy the water. [22] Grosskreutz who was at TJ's (Jim Vruwink Jr's house) the day of the homicide, and who after the crime delivered the missing chrome piece to the Frahm's in Vesper while Jim Vruwink Jr. is at the crime scene has Jim's kids with him most of the day (which they weren't) has Jim going into Vesper between 4:30 - 5:00 p.m. to sell the car (when it was between 6:00 - 6:30 p.m) and has the car in Vesper (which it wasn't). [23] He also recalls taking no calls, even though the Frahm's are sure it wasn't Jim Jr. who they talked to over the phone.

Now clearly either the Frahm's, and Ms. Kosik have the events before 6:30 p.m. on March 24, 1995 all wrong, or Mr. Grosskreutz has an incredibly poor memory or he's not being honest in his comments in this interview. The fact that earlier in that same interview he gives a pretty precise and apparently accurate account of his activities after leaving work ; going to his hobby farm, doing chores, cleaning up, going bowling, etc., would cause us to conclude the latter. (24) That is, however, we would admit conjecture on our part.

It does bring us back to this critical topic, however, that being time frames. We have Deidre and Jim Vruwink's movements up to approximately 6:30 p.m. pretty much detailed. They are on course to be on Cty HH north of Vesper between 6:30 - 6:40, p.m. As to Thomas Vruwink, the topic of times with him and the vehicular homicide itself get very confusing.

In fact the confusion with regard to time will be part and parcel of many of the accounts of the crime ascertained in the follow-up interviews. Reading these initially threw us off as it did the other investigators. Investigator Tom Reichert did an initial time-line and a later one. (25) There is confusion in these and now we understand after studying this for hours on end why.

In retrospect this is very understandable. None of the parties being interviewed realized prior to the event that time was going to be critical. Watches vary and recollections are a bit vague. Ten minutes

one way or another is understandable. Plus by a detailed analyses of all the documents the 'correct' time can be ascertained. As an example I believe we have been able to ascertain Deidre's and Jim Vruwink Jr's movements pretty well between 5:00 and 6:30 p.m. piecing things together. Thus some clarity can be brought to the confusion in cases where honest recollections are recounted..

Conflicting stories are another matter however. Here we are not talking about five or ten minutes one way or another. We are talking about an hour or more. Mr. Grosskreutz's recollections cause us to make this detailed aside, because now that we get into Tom Vruwink's movements and the homicide this 'conflicting stories' dilemma will play an ever increasing role.

Where was Thomas J. Vruwink during this time? Well as just indicated we have conflicting stories. In fact so many that it is virtually mind boggling. We know he was at JoJo's bar in Vesper some time mid to late afternoon. Both he and his fellow joy rider Roger Yenter admit this. The question is exactly when. The more pertinent specific question is when exactly did they leave this bar? If they left when they say, they have an alibi and are not the third and fourth parties to the crime. If they left at 6:15 to 6:30 they probably are.

This becomes one of the key questions in this crime, because as we have laid it out we have Deidre and Jim Vruwink Jr. on Hwy HH between 6:30 and 6:35 p.m. on March 24, 1995. The alibi for Tom Vruwink and Roger Yenter related to this crime, is that they weren't on Hwy HH at this time, instead they were at one Eugene Feltz's place where they "...talked for awhile, mainly about old times and drank a couple of beers." [26] As a result of this trip they claim they weren't on Hwy HH until after the crime. Returning in fact to Jim Vruwink's Jr place around 7:00 p.m. via a different route. (27) After a short stop at Jim's place they went there separate ways -- Yenter to Custer, Tom Vruwink to Marshfield. This alibi supposedly precludes them from being the perpetrators of this crime.

Before we get into the strength of that alibi, let us go back to the crime itself. What do we know? Once you wade through all the confusion over times 6:20 or 6:30 or 6:40, we think it is pretty clear what transpired.

Deidre and Jim Vruwink Jr. are on Hwy HH. Deidre is heading home. Jim Jr., if he is the eye witness as he claims is heading south into Vesper with the piece of chrome trim for the car he has just sold to the Frahm's. If he is instead a perpetrator, he would be heading north to get the part and his daughter Brittany would have still been with him.

What we are going to cover now - the arrival of the third and fourth parties on HH and the homicide - is confusing. So please bear with us. If all accounts are viewed together we believe reasonable parties would conclude Tom Vruwink and Roger Yenter should be prime suspects

As noted Deidre Week is on her bike headed north towards home. All accounts, including the eye witnesses, have her on the very right edge of the road, as far over as she could be.

The most likely scenario we believe has Jim Vruwink Jr. coming south to Vesper in his small car with the chrome trim part for Frahm's. From behind comes a car. It strikes the bike and Miss Week. She is thrown into the ditch. The head trauma is severe and quickly fatal.

We will not, in this document, get into all the ancillary details. Which neighbor arrived on the scene when? Who was on the phone? Who heard what? All of those confusing documents are attached.

That we will say, as we did previously, is when you melt those documents down, the confusion can be, we believe, sorted out.

What Lorrie Griffith remembers hearing? When David Week heard a thud? When Randy Berkholz and Matt Molnar got to the ditch with David. What the Shunke's, Paul Huber, and others saw. While all of it is confusing at first when you examine it closely the facts emerge.

Remember we are dealing with a thirty minute segment of time. A short finite (for Deidre Week the final finite) period of time.

As we previously suggested the confusion about time lines given the given the perimeter of this short window of time can be overcome. The people who initially were unsure of time or thought something happened at 6:20 p.m. were in error. They were in error because watches vary slightly, there was no clue something momentous was occurring and so they were not accurate to the minute. From

what we can see by the documents, however, they did a remarkably good job. The time perimeters when the facts are clear fall within a 10 minute plus or minus error frame. The neighbors who saw and heard did a great workmanlike job.

What are the facts that emerge from this broiled down version of this critical thirty minute time frame?

1. The striking of Deidre occurred between 6:32 and 6:38 p.m. Most likely about 6:34 p.m.
2. David Week heard a thud and left his yard a few minutes later to find Deidre. He most likely left his yard between 6:36 and 6:40 p.m. When he left he saw two cars close together going north.
3. The Shunkes and guest's at around 6:39 - 6:41 p.m. saw the same two cars going north.
4. At 6:44 p.m. within seconds of each other Irene Berkholtz and Jim Vruwink Jr. called 911. David Week, Randy Berkholtz and Matt Molnar were with Deidre in the ditch at this time. Mr. Week then left to inform his wife and others.
5. Vesper and Pittsville First Responders were both assigned at 6:45:59. Vesper arrived at the scene at 6:51:04 p.m. and Pittsville at 7:00:48 p.m.
6. In that little window 6:45:59 to 7:00:48 p.m., the eye witness driving a different car, and different groups of county and state police arrived on the scene.

We believe these six statements can be factually supported by the official documents and the interviews that were taken after the homicide. All of these documents are attached. We urge you to examine these facts closely. Strip away what is confusing and ancillary and we think you will agree they are indisputable.

The seventh fact that is indisputable is that after it was all said and done Deidre Week was dead. The head trauma caused massive bleeding. When the heart had no more blood to pump, it stopped.

There is also an eighth fact that is not in dispute. The car that hit Miss Week didn't stay at the scene. That is unconscionable. That is a crime.

(Note - In this narrative we could have footnoted all the references to document these facts, but that would take page after page. They are all attached. The official records of the Vesper and Pittsville units, the hospital and coroners records, the police departments 'Offense Reports' the interviews with neighbors, they are all here. Look at them, examine them and we think you'll agree the eight points listed above are indisputable facts!)

So Miss. Week is dead, the car that hit her didn't stop. A crime has occurred. Who did it?

Here is where we believe we go from understandable confusion due to watch variations and human memories to conflicting stories and possibly cover-ups and lies? For this segment of our case study we will footnote everything to try and demonstrate that point.

Before we begin that however we would like to present a ninth fact pertaining to the tragic events between 6:30 - 7:00 p.m. on March 24, 1995. That ninth fact is:

The car that struck Deidre Week and didn't stop contained two male occupants - probably Caucasians who were relatively young.

What information is there to support this? Significant -- Officer Mark Swayze's report indicates that Deputy Stark's was talking to the witness Jim Vruwink and that Vruwink indicated "There were two occupants in the car and it fled the scene in a northerly direction on CTH HH. [28] Tom Reichert in an interview conducted with Jim Vruwink at 8:30 p.m. on the night of the homicide noted that Vruwink "....stated to me that he believed there were maybe two people in the vehicle. [29] In a second interview Reichert conducted with James Vruwink on April 13, 1995 Vruwink again states there were two people in the striking vehicle. He is, however, not able to say if they were male or female. [30] Further down the road Officer Swayze talked to Carl and Geraldine Schunke. The Schunke's ".... remembered seeing a two-door silver car north bound on CTH HH. The vehicle had two occupants...." [31] Later on in an interview September 13, 1995 with John Rehrauer, Schunke describes the two occupants fairly in depth.

"He stated there were two white males who he felt were in their 20's with collar length brownish hair in the vehicle. He also recalls that these two individuals possibly had on flannel shirts." [32]

While this ninth fact is probably not on as firm a foundation as the previous eight we believe this fairly well establishes it.

With that established we now delve into the area of conflicting stories. The next question is obviously "Who did it?" The authorities apparently, after over seven years, don't believe they know who did it, or don't believe they have enough evidence to prove it, if they do think they know.

As we have previously stated we spent literally hundreds of hours examining all of the documents. We have looked closely at the documents relating to Carmen Greutzmacher, Scott Carolfi, some Vietnamese gentlemen, and many others. None of them pass our own credibility test. Believe me we were thorough in this as well. So in an effort to give focus we have just copied and included documents pertaining to the strongest most likely case as we have indicated earlier. We believe this evidence is strong enough to convene a John Doe hearing.

The essence of that case is that simply stated **Jim Vruwink was the eye witness to a vehicular homicide in which his brother Tom, with Roger Yenter, was an active participant.**

Now we know they have this alibi, which gets us back to conflicting stories and the strength of that alibi.

At first blush, we would say the alibi looks plausible and we can understand how Officer Tom Reichert and others involved in the case seemed to give it significant credence early on.

Let us lay out that alibi. It covers the time frame from 5:00 p.m. - to approximately 7:30 p.m. The alibi simply stated is that:

- Tom Vruwink and Roger Yenter left JoJo's Bar in Vesper between 5:-5:15 p.m. on March 24, 1995 and went to Eugene Feltz's where they had a few beers with Mr. Feltz. They left Feltz's at or around 7:00 to 7:15 p.m. returning to Jim Vruwink's. At Jim Vruwink's place they learned of the accident on HH. After a short stay at Jim Vruwink's they left to go their separate ways home around 7:30 p.m. Tom Vruwink to Marshfield, Roger Yenter to Custer.

Sounds plausible. Let's look at the supporting documentation. Tom Vruwink in an interview with Investigator Tom Reichert on June 1, 1995 lays out his story in significant detail. Let us quote specific details from this interview:

"He stated to me that he left JoJo's shortly after 5:00 p.m."

"Vruwink told me that he was with a friend of his, Roger Yenter"

"Vruwink went on to state following leaving JoJo's they went to Jim Vruwink's house. He told me that they arrived at Vruwink's at approximately 5:15 p.m. Jim was not at home at the time so Roger and Tom decided to go visit another friend of theirs who lives in the Arpin area. This would be an individual named Eugene Feltz"

Vruwink told us that they met Feltz on CTY N and arrived at Feltz's house before 5:30 p.m.

Vruwink told us that they stayed at the Feltz residence until 7:15 or 7:30 p.m.. It was at that point that he went to his brother Jim's house. He learned at Jim's house from the hired hand Lonnie Grosskreutz that an accident had occurred.

Tom told me he stayed at Jim's for a short period of time leaving about 7:30 to 7:45 p.m. It was at that point he went home.

When Tom left Jim's house he would have driven his own vehicle, also leaving Tom's house (sic-error in Reichert's notes - he must mean Jim Vruwink's house) at the 7:30-7:45 p.m. time would have been Roger Yenter driving his vehicle.

Yenter's vehicle was a gray Pontiac Grand AM. [33]

OK sounds reasonable.

What does Roger Yenter say?

The day following Reichert's interview with Tom Vruwink, Reichert interviewed Yenter. We quote from that interview.

"Yenter told us that he and Tom were at JoJo's Tavern until about 5:00 - 5:15 p.m. on 3-24-95. He stated that once they left there he and Tom went to Jim's house. Jim however was not at home.

I would point out that Roger also told us that he was driving his vehicle and Tom was riding with him throughout their time during the evening.

Following this stop at Jim's house and finding him not at home, they left to go to another friend of Tom Vruwink's, Eugene Feltz. Yenter stated that in order to get to Feltz's they had to go to Arpin. They took CTY HH to CTH N, taking N into Arpin, however on the way to Arpin they met with Feltz along the road and then proceeded to follow Feltz to his house. Yenter told us that he and Tom Vruwink stayed with Eugene Feltz at his home until 7:00 or shortly after 7:00 p.m. Following that they went back to Jim Vruwink's house. Again the course of travel was CTH N to CTY HH to Jim Vruwink's house. At no time, according to Roger Yenter, did they pass or go through the accident scene.

Yenter stated that he stayed at Jim's house for about 5-10 minutes, leaving at 7:20 to 7:25 p.m.

Yenter also stated that when he left Jim Vruwink's house, he and Tom both took separate vehicles from that location.

Yenter told us that he did own a Pontiac Grand Am at the time. [34]

OK, very similar to Tom Vruwink's account. One point of further defining their actions is Yenter's statement that he was driving his vehicle, presumably the gray Pontiac Grand AM.

These two accounts would have Vruwink and Yenter at the accident scene on CTY HH over one hour before the accident. And never after that. Thus they couldn't have been the perpetrators.

Sounds plausible and like we said a decent alibi. Just a couple of points before we leave these initial alibi statements. First of all a minor point. From these statements we would conclude that Vruwink and Yenter decided to go to Feltz's when they were at Jim's house after leaving JoJo's. They then coincidentally met him (Feltz) on CTY N on their way to Feltz's place.

OK: Kind of an amazing coincidence but possible.

The second point relating to their two accounts is, we feel, more important and related to the chance meeting on the road (CTY N) with Eugene Feltz. That point is:

Yenter is wrong in his statement. You do not, from Jim Vruwink's, go to Arpin to go to Eugene Feltz's. You go down HH to where it connects with N and follow it in an easterly direction to Feltz's.

Going to Arpin would be way out of the way. It would require taking a left where CTY HH and CTY N intersect (versus going straight on N) and a four or five mile trip out of the way to Arpin. You would then have to retrace this route to get to Feltz's - not very logical. A person new to the area like Yenter might get confused like this, however. This 'nonsensical' turn does however create the possibility of Yenter and Vruwink meeting Feltz on the road. Without this, however, we can't see how the two parties would have met on the road. So while it makes no sense at all, and the going to Arpin to get to Feltz's part of Yenter's story is flat wrong. (a lie?) It does facilitate the meeting on the road that supposedly occurred.

This would be our first major question with the alibis. But for now we won't dwell on that, we will let it ride a bit. Please remember this detail, however.

OK, so the stories are very much alike and plausible. What does Eugene Feltz say since he's the third party to the alibi.

Feltz was interviewed a couple of days later, June 4, 1995 by Investigator Reichert. Feltz memory at this time was not quite as clear as Yenter's or Tom Vruwink's. We quote from the document.

"Feltz remembered that Yenter and Vruwink had come to his residence at about that time. He could not specifically tell me however that it was the 24th of March; however, he remembered the two of them coming to his house. Feltz estimated that they would have met on CTY N at about 6:00 p.m. He stated that they stayed until approximately 7:00 p.m.

Feltz told us that Yenter was the person who was driving a gray car when they came to his house. He stated that it did not appear that they had been drinking a lot and that they had "a couple of beers" while at the Feltz residence.

Feltz had mentioned that they had stayed for approximately an hour. When they left they had said that they were going to go to Jim's house and then go home.

Feltz told us that he did not notice any type of damage or anything suspicious about the Yenter vehicle while it was at his house. [35]"

OK. Quite similar. Investigator Reichert editorializes immediately after the above quotation in closing his report.

"This statement of Eugene Feltz seems to correspond exactly with the comments of both Roger Yenter and Tom Vruwink. It would certainly appear that the statements made by these witnesses are credible."

We would grant Officer Reichert's statement that at first blush "...it would certainly appear that the statements made by these witnesses are credible," however, we would strongly disagree with his statement that they correspond exactly with Yenter and Vruwink's statement.

Let us point out for example that Feltz has them meeting on CTY N at "...around 6:00 p.m." This does not correspond exactly with Tom Vruwink's statement that they "...arrived at Feltz's house before 5:30 p.m." [36]

That's a one half hour discrepancy. Also Feltz was not even positive it was the 24th. He thought they "... had come to his residence at about that time." [37]

We would submit Officer Reichert's statement that they 'correspond exactly' is in error. Plus there is the point we would make that he didn't question any of them, in particular Roger Yenter on how they met on CTY N. Again you do not go to Arpin in order to get from Jim Vruwink's to Eugene Feltz's. It facilitates the alibi by having them meet on the road but it categorically is not true that you go that way. We submit a diligent professional officer would have questioned them as to why they took a wrong turn towards Arpin to get to Feltz's.

Granted however, the stories are similar and plausible and it definitely puts them miles away from the homicide between 6:34 and 6:38 p.m. on March 24, 1995. Officer Reichert is so convinced of the merits of the alibi as given in fact that on June 1, 1995, after interviewing Tom Vruwink and before interviewing Yenter and Feltz he states he will be "conducting short follow-ups with both Roger Yenter and Eugene Feltz to "lock up" Tom Vruwink's story." [39]

Wow, now there's a statement! Even before interviewing Yenter and Feltz, he's preparing to 'lock-up' Tom Vruwink's story. Maybe this explains why he misses the time difference in Tom's statement and Feltz's, and Yenter's patently false statement that you go to Arpin to get to Feltz's from Jim Vruwink's. When you're looking to lock something up before you talk to someone, we would submit it seems, at least in this case, to cause you to miss some possible discrepancies, mistakes, or maybe outright lies, that just might be significant.

Without trying to be overly critical that would be one of our key points at this juncture. Namely that early on in the investigation the police seem awful focused on 'locking things up' versus doing a thorough investigation using critical judgment and sound investigative procedures.

For example, the same Officer Reichert at the close of a April 13th interview with Jim Vruwink writes "In conclusion, I found James Vruwink's story to be very plausible and very consistent...." (40) Interesting in that interview Jim Vruwink is quoted by Officer Reichert as stating:

"He also told us that as far as Tom's whereabouts, he did see him on the road at 6:55 p.m. enroute to Eugene Flitch's (sic) house. Jim stated that his brother was operating a Pontiac Grand AM. Jim also told me that his children were at his parents house at the time the accident happened." [41]

We would have hoped around the time he was conducting his June 1995 interviews that Officer Reichert would have referred to his April interview of Tom's brother Jim. A critical look at that report, the April one, we submit would have caused him to be checking for more inconsistencies versus locking things up.

For example Jim has Tom going to Flitch's (sic) house at 6:55 p.m. Now wait a minute this is almost two hours after Tom and Yenter claim they went to Feltz's and about one hour after Feltz claims to have met Tom and Yenter on the road.

Plus 6:55 p.m. is shortly after the homicide. This would put Yenter and Tom Vruwink in the area of the crime, not miles away as they claim.

Officer Reichert wrote up all of these reports, but he seems to have missed these 'inconsistencies'. Plus we would point out two other inconsistencies from Jim's April 13 interview that should be clear from what we have presented in previous parts of this document.

- a) both Yenter and Tom claim Yenter was operating the Pontiac not Tom as Jim states
- b) The children were not at his parents as Jim claims, at least not Brittany.

We would submit after examining these four interviews (4-13-95 Jim Vruwink, 6-1-95 Tom Vruwink, 6-2-95 Roger Yenter and 6-4-95 Eugene Feltz) we wouldn't have been making statements like Officer Reichert did that the statements seem to "correspond exactly" [42] No we would have been just a little more critical. And we submit he should have been as well.

Maybe a professional thoughtful statement saying they seem 'plausible' but noting the inconsistencies would have been in order. But certainly no 'locking up' statement.

We will grant Officer Reichert an extenuating circumstance. That being the polygraph that Jim Vruwink took and passed on May 11, 1995. This event occurred between the April 13 interview with Jim Vruwink and the early June interviews with Tom Vruwink, Roger Yenter, and Eugene Feltz.

Giving Officer Reichert the benefit of the doubt maybe the 'passing' of the polygraph influenced his critical judgment when he did the later interviews. This event certainly did get great play in the local media and since he (Officer Reichert) was a key player in this exam it could have been influencing him. Given that let's take a slight side trip and examine that polygraph examination of Jim Vruwink.

Let's examine this event - in the context of how it might have affected Officer Reichert's critical judgment in June 1995, and in the context of it being one of the seminal events in this investigation.

We refer to it as a seminal event, and we take this side trip, because in retrospect we view Mr. Jim Vruwink's taking of, and supposedly passing the polygraph as the event that has had a significant influence on the rest of the investigation, both in reality and in the court of public opinion. Before we focus directly on the polygraph, we believe a closer look should be taken as to the Wood County Police Department's actions the night of the crime.

For reasons that we feel are insufficient and that we don't understand (which we will cover later) it appears to us that the night of the homicide the Wood County police department for all intents and purposes wrote the Vruwinks off as serious suspects. This occurred in large part after an 11:00 p.m. interview that night by Officer Michael Swayze and Rick Kirst at Jim Vruwink's house. (Note: It wasn't until this time that Wood County located Tom Vruwink) From what we gather, three male Vruwink's were interviewed at that time. (43) Officer Swayze's synopsis of that interview goes as follows:

"It should be noted that none of the Vruwink's seemed overly upset or nervous. Their stories seemed to check out and they seemed unusually eager to help us find the striking vehicle." (44)

While they clearly remained suspects after this interview, our examination of the documents from that time frame on suggests that for the next approximately three weeks and beyond the county police focused in on other suspects.

The Week's state that they also were inclined in other directions early on. It wasn't until they observed Ron Vruwink's strange behavior at their daughter's wake that they had any thoughts of the Vruwink's being involved.

This flicker of a thought turned into a flame in early April 1995 when a number of neighbors pointed out discrepancies between Jim Vruwink's statements, as printed in the press and on television, and their own observations.

These doubts culminated in the Week's asking for the Wood County Police Department to thoroughly interview the neighbors (versus the 'lock it up' atmosphere that seemed to persist the night of the homicide).

Kurt Heuer (now the county sheriff) conducted those interviews on April 11, 1995. They appear on pages 120 -128 of the W.C.I. documents, Volume 1.

It appears to us that Heuer did a good job. There are no anecdotal comments, unlike a lot of the other reports, and he seems to have conducted himself in a professional manner.

Heuer, in fact, seems to indicate that he perceived discrepancies as well, and indicated to the Week's that they would be followed up on.

Unfortunately they weren't. Anecdotally the Week's have heard that shortly after April 11, Heuer was pulled from the case. If so, he would be the second officer with some skepticism about the Vruwink's statements who was pulled from the case. They first being Officer Mark Gosh (reference W.C.I. Volume 1, pages 53-57) One pertinent question might be why were these officers pulled and who instigated the pulling?

In fact on April 18, 1995, the Week's in utter frustration went to the police and asked them to involve the Department of Criminal Investigation. (44) Lt. Robert Levendoske made this contact, and the document doesn't say why, but apparently D.C.I. was convinced after this interaction that "...it appears that everything necessary in the investigation has already been done." (45)

We would love to know what Lt. Levendoske told them to convince D.C.I. of that. In any event it was, as this document notes after this, that Sheriff Brian Illingworth notified the Week's that D.C.I. would not be involved in the investigation.

In frustration in response to this the Week's requested no further contact with the county police. The Sheriff showed up anyway, however, and we believe tried to provoke David Week into an incident. After this the Week's requested a restraining order against the sheriff through the local courts but were denied.

All of this was going on in late April of 1995, and the sheriff was in the media noting the conflict between he and the Week's. There was no significant follow-up during this time, as previously indicated on Kurt Heuer's leads.

Which brings us back to that seminal event -- the polygraph test! We would note we have precious little information on it and a potential key area is blacked out. (46)

Please at this point refer to pages 161-163 in the Wood County documents. The conclusion of the examiner, LaVern J. Reigel (the examination took place in Marshfield) was that

"In the final analyses it would be my opinion that the subject, James Vruwink was telling the truth as far as what he witnessed on the night of the accident. He was also telling the truth as far as he, himself not having taken part in the accident." (47)

He apparently bases this conclusion on five questions which are listed on the second page of the document. The questions are:

#31 - Regarding the auto accident involving Deidre Week, do you intend to answer truthfully to each question about that?

Answer: Yes

#33 - On March 24, 1995, did you strike Deidre Week with a motor vehicle?

Answer: No

#35 - In regards to the accident involving Deidre Week, did you yourself strike her with your vehicle.

Answer No

#37A - Are you withholding any information regarding the accident involving Deidre Week?

Answer No.

#37B - Do you know for sure who struck Deidre Week with a motor vehicle?

Answer No.

Mr. Reigel notes that "the only minuses that I had on the whole examination was a little bit on the question "If he knew who had done this?" (48)

He also notes two other key points.

1 - "I also ran a negative chart on him, and he scored very high on that.

2 - "I might add that James even had kind of low reactions, and this is usually due to someone who is very confident and very truthful." (49)

Polygraphs are not an area of expertise but we are awful curious as to what these last two conclusions mean, in particular based on the seminal nature of this test.

A person could conclude that James Vruwink was being truthful that day in his answers. In fact it certainly would appear that he was.

We would like to make some comments, however, considering this seems in our mind to have clouded Officer Reichert's and others views from that point on.

First of all, the way this was conducted seems a bit amateurish to us. The questions are few and vague and were formulated after a pretest conference between Officer Reichert and Mr. Reigel. Mr. Reigel is quoted as saying in fact:

"I didn't have a copy of the reports because they are so extensive that it would be almost impossible to read them all." (50)

If we were the Week's we would be inclined to take deep offense at that statement. This test was administered approximately six weeks after the homicide. We have read all of the documents gathered up to that point and in fact all afterwards. While extensive in nature we are not talking about the collected knowledge of the Western World or even War and Peace. We wonder if Mr. Reigel would have been so cavalier if it had been his daughter. "Almost impossible" to read is a statement not worthy of a professional. And where did he get this opinion from if he didn't have a copy of them? Officer Reichert we presume! Talk about setting things up.

Secondly we would be very interested in a professional translation of the other two key points, i.e. negative chart and James overall low reactions. An investigator the Week's previously employed indicates that there are ways to "work a polygraph" if you know how. We will later on develop the relationship between Sheriff Illingworth and James Vruwink. We think it will demonstrate that here is a significant possibility that Jim Vruwink knew how "to work a polygraph." As an aside, we find it

interesting that Mr. Reigel notes that "I've gotten the impression that he, himself, (referring to Jim Vruwink) wanted this examination...." He concludes the reason for this is that Jim "...more or less wanted to.... clean up rumors..." (51) That's plausible. Also plausible might be that he would if he figured there were problems (the Heuer interviews in April) and that he had a good chance to manipulate the results. In that vein we find it interesting that much later on, January 24, 1996 in fact, in an interview with Kim Kosik, James ex-wife, John Rehrauer pursues a line of questioning about a prescription drug. (52) The vast majority of this exchange is blacked out, but it would lead me to believe Rehrauer when he got on the case eventually tripped to this possible manipulation as well.

Over the years, through the grapevine, the Week's have heard that Jim may have had a prescription for a drug called Zortac. Question? If Jim Vruwink was on Zortac or other such drug could it have influenced his results?

*INVESTIGATOR REICHERT
probably
not the
correct
medication*
None of the local authorities seem to have looked at all the documents close enough to have this flag raised, however. In fact after this Investigator Reichert's got things "locked up" even though as we have indicated there are significant discrepancies in the three interviews and certainly with the one given by Jim Vruwink on April 13, 1995.

After the polygraph occurs on May 11, 1995 we see no further look at the Vruwinks for about six weeks. The police focus their attention on other suspects. It isn't until July 5, 1995 when Lt. Levendoske and Investigator Reichert met with the Week's and their first investigator Jerry Beltin, that we see any refocusing on the Vruwinks. (53) A valuable six weeks was lost.

At that meeting the Week's presented some information from the investigator to the police that they agreed to follow-up, on and the Week's agreed to keep the lines of communication open. (54)

We can't read minds, but in looking at the documentation after this July 5 meeting it appears Officer Reichert starts to get a sense that maybe he was premature in 'locking things up' and maybe in fact that he'd been lead down a primrose path. We don't know this for a fact, but we get that sense. He certainly is still skeptical of some of the leads, as he should be, but the interviews are less of the 'wrap it up' variety.

It was during this time that the Week's began soliciting written statements from witnesses. They wanted these for their meeting with State Attorney General Jim Doyle. That meeting was in August of 1995. We believe this was the first time written documentation was gathered as to the car the Frahm's purchased and many of the neighbors recollections of the tragic night of March 24, 1995. Most of these statements were not in agreement with Jim Vruwink's recollections in key regards and are part of the evidence package that are included at the end of this document.

The Week's felt they needed all of this because their first request to get D.C.I. involved made on April 18, 1995 you will recall, was summarily rejected. (55)

This time, with the new material, within days of their visit to Madison, the Sheriff changed his approach and wrote a letter asking for D.C.I. to get involved. This request was promptly (the same day) agreed to. (56) We will note just in passing, the Sheriff took a jab at the Week's in his request by stating "Their investigator is also interfering with our ability to continue." (57) We don't believe that statement is supportable but it was made.

At almost the same time the Week's were in fact receiving harassing calls. One call was traced to Jim Vruwink, who the police erroneously say is an uncle of the Jim Vruwink involved in this case -- he is in fact his father. (58) The Week's recall this voice to be a gruff older man's voice. Anecdotally we have heard of other people in Wood County who have been harassed by a gruff old man after having dealings with the Vruwink's.

The Week's unfortunately experienced a pattern of this and letters, one which Tracy Vruwink implies could have come from Mabel Spranger, Jim's grandmother. It's troubling to note that this information was kept from the Week's (Reference in particular Vol 3, page 387). We believe a pattern of harassment would have been cause for civil litigation. The county never informed the Week's however. This deception is very troubling and will be examined more closely.

Let's however, get back to the particulars of the case. Shortly after this in early September 1995 John Rehrauer from D.C.I. is assigned to the case. From that point on he (John Rehrauer) and Investigator Tom Reichert appear to be the key investigators on the case.

Our professional conclusion is that as soon as Rehrauer shows up things get a whole lot more professional. Heuer had been one of the exceptions, in that his early reports looked good and thorough, but most of the others were filled with unsupportable anecdotes, unwarranted conclusions. You name it. They were also administrative handled in an horrendous fashion. Examine the early reports of the crime and in some cases three weeks passed before reports were typed. We wonder who was coordinating things? Reports contaminated by later observations are tainted. You will note many were in fact contaminated.

The sheriff, by the way, was all over the media saying they were doing all that they could, and in some cases insinuating the Week's were the problem. Where was he when it came to handling the investigation? Except for his letter to D.C.I. he is virtually nonexistent in the paper work. Now, however, John Rehrauer shows up and we perceive a whole new 'professional' approach. Examine volume one of the Wood County Investigation and compare it with volume two, three, and four, the joint D.C.I. Wood County work and tell us if you don't see the change.

Unfortunately almost six months had passed before Mr. Rehrauer arrived and precious time had passed. Plus Mr. Rehrauer, being a professional, followed up on all leads so he went back over all the other leads. Again more time passed.

We do, however in his work get a sense that Mr. Rehrauer is focusing in. One of his earliest interviews is of Tracy Stalter, Jim Vruwink's live-in girl friend, now wife. This interview is contained early in volume two.[59] It's followed up by an interview with Ms. Stalter's baby sitter. [60] In these interviews Mr. Rehrauer seems to be attempting to hone in on Tracy's recollections of that night. It's interesting to note he immediately runs into an error in her memory (i.e. where her daughter was being baby sat), and also she states Jim indicated to her that he "...pulled into a home near the accident and saw a woman at the door he got out of the car and waved to her...."(64) This would have to be Lorrie Griffith, and Lorrie categorically denies this happened. Plus it would raise questions I think as to his chase scenario. Finally its interesting to note Tracy in this interview indicates that she got home from taking the children to eat around 9:30 or 10:00 p.m. [62] One of the things that she notes happened upon her return was that Jim "...Vruwink did leave the house with his brother for a period of time." [63] Rehrauer doesn't pursue this, but I'd assume this was Ron or most probably Tom. Which would indicate the brothers talked to each other alone, long before they ever called the Wood County police office. Again Officer Swayze had indicated in his accident night report that Jim called around 11:00 p.m. [64] Interesting that they waited an hour to call. That interview by Kirst and Swayze is also interesting, but we will return to that.

Anyhow Rehrauer seems to be bringing a new professionalism, and his reports, unlike a lot of earlier ones, seem to focus on fact and explore discrepancies. This is, in our view, a welcome change.

The months pass by, however, as previously noted, as he explores all the myriad possibilities. In fact, he spent what appears to be about a whole year honing in on various leads about the various suspects. It's a thorough and methodical examination.

With regards to Jim and Tom Vruwink, Yenter and Feltz, except for some early interviews previously noted and some recapping of previous Wood County reports, he doesn't seem to get back to them full force until August 1996. At that time he reinterviews Tracy Stalter as to her baby sitting arrangements on March 24, 1995 and tries to, with varying degrees of success to interview key people in the Vruwink family. (65) These interviews occurred between late August 1996 and December of 1996. Notable lack of cooperation is demonstrated by father Jim and Tom. We would characterize their non

responses to his questions as the 'bull shit' interviews. It's a term they use to dismiss Rehrauer and one of their favorite words we gather.

Interesting enough, even with this lack of cooperation Rehrauer again seems to be honing in. For example, in the interviews with Tracy Stalter he gets information on the accident she had with her car (the one Jim drove back to the scene) a few days before March 24. [[66] He also gets Stalter to say Tom Vruwink "...has a drinking problem and he drinks every day." In addition to having Tracy say Tom's live in girl friend Wendy Day "...expressed some concerns about Tom's whereabouts on the night of the Deidre Week's accident." [67] He is clearly collecting pertinent information.

Which brings us to an interesting time in this sad affair, August 1996 through July 1997. It also brings me back to the Tom Vruwink, Roger Yenter, Eugene Feltz, alibi.

We think its fairly clear in this time frame John Rehrauer is focusing in on some interesting leads. For the first time it appears like a systematic look is going to be taken at the vehicles.

Oh sure vehicles have been examined before, but we would submit not in a systematic fashion. Beginning in December 1996 Mr. Rehrauer attempts to rectify this.

He interviews Tracy Stalter, asks her numerous questions about her Ford Taurus and gets her agreement to provide info about the accident she was in the days preceding the homicide.{68} This is clearly pertinent because of the critical nature of the cars to the case, and specifically because Jim Vruwink Jr. drove this car back to the site of the crime.

In January of 1997 Rehrauer makes contacts with Jackie Zinda a rep for State Farm Insurance on this matter. {69} She defers providing information saying it must go through Ms. Stalter. Ms. Stalter did provide this information with Mr. Rehrauer receiving it on February 10, 1997 {70}. It is our belief that Mr. Rehrauer was focusing in on fertile ground at this point. It's late (almost two years after the homicide), but finally someone is doing some research on the Vruwink family vehicles.

Amazingly enough, it's about this time that the ex-sheriff of Wood County, Brian Illingworth, has his 'breakdown'. Now this may be mere coincidence, but isn't it amazing timing. He would have been aware of the fact that in late 1996 Mr. Reichert was systematically attempting to contact Vruwink family members {71}. Now this is coupled with research on the cars.

We would speculate at this point that the unseen hand that pulled Officer Gosh from the investigation early on and also redirected Mr. Heuer might have been Sheriff Brian Illingworth. Maybe he feared their effectiveness. In any event he doesn't have the luxury of power here. He can't pull Mr. Rehrauer from the case. Could it be that knowing what he knew and unable to manipulate things fear at this point drove him over the edge.

Of course that's all unprovable speculation, but isn't it an amazing coincidence. Along those lines it's interesting that in 1997 when Dr. O'Rourke from Rock County, in a state of panic, calls Wood County asking them to get the sheriff because he was suicidal and dangerous she says at one point.

"He did not want to be discharged from the hospital when he was discharged. I felt that he wasn't really making any more gains in the hospital at that time and felt that he needed to get back into dealing with reality versus hiding out." {72}

Now that's interesting. Hiding out from what? A reality he was trying to keep secret? An outcome that could destroy him? We wonder.

Now again this is all speculation, but after looking at all the documentation we find it highly interesting that this is when Mr. Illingworth breaks down. Not in 1995 or 1998, but corresponding very closely to when an outside investigator is focusing in on his close friends and their autos.

Anyhow enough on that. The key point is that at this time Investigator Rehrauer is focusing in on the Vruwinks and their cars. Sheriff Illingworth is having a breakdown and, as previously noted, the Vruwinks are mad. We wonder why.

Let's now go back to the alibi. As previously noted, Tom Vruwink's alibi for his whereabouts at the time of the homicide has some holes in it. In fact in looking at what we have written so far, we believe we have been far too generous. It is in fact full of holes.

For example, as previously noted, the meeting on the road story is bogus. If Tom Vruwink and Roger Yenter were going to Feltz's house they would not, as Yenter states, go to Arpin and thus they would not have met Feltz on the road. Hole one.

Hole two: The time when they arrive at Feltz's house varies somewhat depending on who is talking -- Feltz, Yenter, or Tom Vruwink. It would vary tremendously if Jim Vruwink's April 13, 1995 interview was accurate. He states that he saw them at 6:55 p.m. on the way to Flitch's (sic) in Officer Reichert's report. (73) Clearly this is impossible since we know that at 6:55 p.m. Jim Vruwink Jr. was back at the scene of the homicide. Maybe he was off by ten minutes. Maybe he saw them on the road to Feltz's at 6:45 p.m. Right after he called 911. It would make sense, that the three of them (Jim, Tom, and Yenter) would, if they were involved, and had something to hide, split up. One goes back to the accident and buys time, the other two head to a safe haven -- a close friends house. Sure it is speculation, but considering Paul Huber's account of seeing one "...silver color or very light color ..." car going "... as fast as he could go" "... north on Cty HH towards Sherry" at around 7:00 p.m." the night of the homicide (74) it may be more than mere speculation.

Interesting isn't it. All the car witnesses along the road saw two cars go north, but slightly later north of Jim Vruwink's house Paul Huber only saw one car booking it to Sherry. Interestingly enough none of the three, from what we can see, were even asked about Huber's account. We wonder how they'd do on a lie detector test on that one! Of course, our gang of three try to make the meeting with Feltz seem low key, like nothing was amiss.

Feltz in fact when questioned by Rehrauer in September of 1997 low keys almost everything. Stating his relationship with Tom Vruwink "... started to diminish about the time of Deidre Week's accident". (25) If so it must have picked up not too much later considering he was a groomsman for Tom Vruwink's wedding on March 31, 2001 (76) (Note -- a wedding six years and one week after the homicide. Interesting considering hit and run has a six years statute of limitations in Wisconsin).

We have a feeling to use one of the Vruwink's favorite words that this account, and all of Jim, Tom, Roger Yenter, and Eugene Feltz's stories are "bull shit". We don't believe the meeting at Feltz's was a low key meeting where they casually drank a few beers. It was a rush "get rid of the car come up with a story" meeting while Jim held fort at the scene giving a bogus description of a burgundy G.M. car being the striking vehicle.

If that is true it would be critical they get together with Jim to get both stories straight before Tom, Yenter, or Feltz are questioned by the police.

Before we go on, let us just lay out in its entirety the theory we have as to what happened.

The theory is that -- **the striking vehicle was driven by Tom Vruwink with Roger Yenter as passenger, Jim Vruwink Jr. observed the accident . After the homicide both cars went north on Cty HH and pulled into Jim Vruwink's driveway. They hurriedly talked and came up with a bare bones plan. Jim goes back to the scene, Tom and Yenter go to Sherry with the striking car. (They realize several witnesses have seen them on the road including David Week. They can't all just run.) So Tom and Yenter take off for Feltz's. Jim calls 911 and then goes back to the scene. The striking car is hid at Feltz' and later destroyed or buried. Jim buys time at the scene. Tom, who was legally drunk, gets back to Marshfield after hiding the car. Yenter goes home to Custer. After doing his thing with the police Jim Jr. gets ahold of other members of the Vruwink family. Tom comes back to Jim's house. They compare stories bringing brother Ron, who has been contacted, into things and prep. At around 11:00 p.m. Jim Jr. calls the police in for the "we didn't do it" story at his house.**

That is the theory in a nutshell. It's amazing to us after reading all the documentation that would support this that this was never pursued from a questioning aspect.

What evidence? A heck of a lot more than supports the "we were at Feltz's alibi" and with no holes (except for their denials). If you keep in mind all the holes we have noted in that alibi previously

i.e:

- the meeting on the road that couldn't have happened.
- the time frame discrepancies.
- the driver inconsistencies, etc.

While we lay out this evidence, we think you'll see this theory is a whole lot more plausible than the alibi.

The evidence -- First of all we've already established that Tom Vruwink was at JoJo's Bar in Vesper on March 24, 1995. He claims to have left the bar around 5:00 p.m. as we've shown.

Outside of the conspirators however, only one other person has corroborated this departure time. That person being Faye Elliot.

Elliot was interviewed on May 23, 1995 by Officer Reichert and claimed Tom Vruwink left the bar "...at about 5:00 p.m.". (77) Certainly a corroborating statement for the alibi.

The integrity of this statement was called into question in July of 1995 however. Mr. Dennis Raab was interviewed by Reichert after his name came up in the investigation as someone who at a local horse pull had heard Elliot say "... that Tom Vruwink had asked him to lie about his whereabouts on March 24" (78)

Reichert interviewed Raab on July 11, 1995. In that interview Raab claims that Elliot had indicated to him at the horse pull that indeed Tom Vruwink had contacted Elliot and asked him to say "...that he was with him all night long, but in fact there "... was a time lapse where he didn't know where Tom Vruwink was ..." (79)

Officer Reichert followed this information up by reinterviewing Faye Elliot the next day. Elliot "emphatically denied" Raab's claims in that interview (80)

When asked where Raab would have gotten these views Elliot weakly claimed "he was pushing the issue" of where Tom Vruwink was in the conversation with Raab at the horse pull. (81)

This is an interesting statement in that he doesn't deny having left the aforesaid impressions with Raab. He just down plays it. Reichert in his normal anecdotal way buys this hook, line, and sinker by saying "I tend to believe him" and that "... Elliot is the type of person who seems to have a very definite sense of right and wrong and I don't believe that he would lie under these circumstances. (82)

Virtually all of Reichert's reports are filled with these unsupportable anecdotes. Certainly a far cry from Dragnet's "just the facts".

In that 'just the facts' regard Reichert had been given information in another interview on July 6 which directly refuted the 5:00 p.m. bar departure story.

That information was provided by Harry Dolens, a man the Week's investigator Jerry Bettin had interviewed (Note: Contrary to the sheriff's later claim that the Week's investigator was "interfering with the county's ability to continue." (83) he was in fact providing leads that tested the credibility of the alibi for the sheriff's good friends. That doesn't constitute interfering) Dolens in that interview clearly states "...he did see Tom Vruwink at JoJo's Tavern at 6:00 p.m. when he (Dolens) left." (84)

This is a direct refutation of the possible conspirators and Faye Elliot's claim. Reichert however does not press Elliot on this less than a week later when he interviews him. We can't understand this! The previous investigator the Week's hired has indicated proper procedure at this point would have been to have questioned Elliot extensively noting, without giving names, that they have a person who directly denies his claims. Nothing of the sort was done. Reichert just, as previously noted, recites anecdotes that indicate he believes Elliot. Seems like some training was lacking in the department!

Amazingly enough a rock solid confirmation of Dolens claim that Tom Vruwink was in the bar after 6:00 p.m. was provided in a August 19, 1997 interview of the JoJo's bar tender, the night of the homicide, a lady named Tracey Huber. In fact the Huber interview should have, we submit, put the whole alibi story into question.

Huber in great detail recalls having to wait to go to work at the bar because her husband and Ed Huber were in the woods (someone had to be around to baby-sit). (85) As a result she didn't get to the bar until "...around 5:00 p.m. and worked until 2:30 a.m. ..." (86)

Ms. Huber goes on to relate she "... recalled serving Tom Vruwink and his rider two mixed drinks and possibly a third during the hour they were in the bar. She stated one of the two was drinking Windsors and coke". (87)

Wow, this is amazing. She didn't get to the bar until 5:00 p.m. She recalls the specific drink of one of the two men. And she recalls serving them two or three of these drinks and has them staying in the bar about an hour. That, we submit, clearly corroborates Mr. Dolan's recollection and has Tom Vruwink and Roger Yenter at JoJo's after 6:00 p.m. the night of the homicide. The alibi seems to have holes? Big time!

Unfortunately we see no indication that anyone ever connected the July 1995 interview of Dolens with the August 1997 interview of Huber. Again we can't understand this. The only people who claim the possible conspirators left the bar around 5:00 p.m. are the possible conspirators and Faye Elliot. We have already noted Elliot's claim seems rather weak in that Tom Vruwink contacted him to be a supporting witness and that shortly thereafter he cast doubt on that statement at a horse pull.

Here, however, we have two clearly neutral informed parties denying the validity of the alibi. We just can't understand this lack of follow-up. Where was the oversight? Where was the sheriff?

So we would submit we have given concrete evidence that the alibi is in doubt and that in fact our theory is quite plausible. If Tom Vruwink and Roger Yenter left the bar after 6:00 p.m. they very well could have been on Cty HH at 6:34 p.m. and be the perpetrators of the homicide. They would by this testimony also probably be legally drunk. Yenter has admitted that he was. (88) And Tom Vruwink's live in girlfriend at the time, later wife, now ex-wife, maintained a diary in which she claims "At 8:15 Tom came home very drunk and his eyes were glazed over". (89) Thus, if they were the perpetrators, no question about it, it was a vehicular homicide.

As a quick aside 'again' it's amazing -- tragic -- to us that like so many other things in this case the around 11:00 p.m. interview of the three Vruwink males -- Jim Jr., Tom, and Ron, the night of the homicide was so amateurish and poorly done. The Week's previous investigator indicates proper procedure would in no way have allowed the three brothers to sit together at one of their own houses and cover for each other. Kirst and Swayze allowed this. Again, like with Reichert, their interview of the three brothers is filled with anecdotes i.e. "...none of the Vruwinks seemed overly upset." and ... "they seemed genuinely eager to help us". (90) The Week's took a lot of heat as a family for, during the 1996 reelection of the sheriff, orchestrating a sign campaign that inferred the Wood County police (sheriff?) department was Mickey Mouse. We think if you look at their work, this report being another example, they were dead on.

Their previous investigator indicates the brothers, by proper procedure, should have been taken to the courthouse, separated and interrogated separately. Since they know at this time Tom had been in a bar, it would have also made sense to do an alcohol test on him. But none of this happened. We concur with this investigators conclusions.

So the alibi has 'swiss cheese' size holes. And Yenter and Tom Vruwink were drunk. What's a possible key to getting to the bottom of things? **We would submit it's the cars.** Solve the mystery of the cars and we might have our answer.

Unfortunately this also was not done, and in fact was handled in a Mickey Mouse manner by the Wood County police department. During the just noted interview by Kirst and Swayze, Tom Vruwink invites the officers to check his car (clearly a different one, we would submit, than the one he was driving at the time of the homicide). Do they take him up on the invitation and do a workmanlike job, noting license plate numbers and description of the car? No!! Swayze writes "When Rick and I left the residence we did look at several cars parked in the driveway but saw no damage to any of them." (91) We would submit that's pretty Mickey Mouse work. They looked at several cars, Wow! Didn't even ask whose car belonged to whom or take notes. Unbelievable.

So the night of the homicide, the critical car angle is botched. Going back to previous writing, isn't it again highly interesting that in late 1996 and early 1997 when a competent investigator, John Rehrauer, focuses in on the cars the Vruwinks get mad and refuse to cooperate and the Sheriff has a breakdown. Coincidence or fear of the truth? Let me, because I think it is the key to the mystery, focus in on the car angle.

In a document the Week's submitted to Robbie Lowery during the winter of 2002, they delineated some of their thoughts on this subject. We won't footnote or rehash all of that because it is available from Mr. Lowery or Mr. Rehrauer. But in a nutshell what they said is the **Vruwink's claims as to their actions and cars makes no sense.**

For example Jim Jr. switched cars to go back to the scene. His reason for this is totally illogical. He says he wanted a faster car for the chase. There was no chase to be pursued. Secondly once you sort through the confusion (we would submit propagated in part by the Vruwink's) we find that we can't be certain what car Tom and Roger Yenter took when they left JoJo's that night. The sloppy police work allowed this mystery to go unsolved. That car was probably the homicide vehicle. Additionally it probably was not any of the vehicles that has been examined so far.

Reread all of the night of the incident reports and we think you'll concur all the people who saw two vehicles on Cty HH after the homicide were pretty much in the same ball park as to the description of the lead vehicle. We would include Mr. Huber in this group with his recollection of the one vehicle north of Jim Vruwink Jr's high tailing it to Sherry.

One person, however, is in fact all over the map in his various descriptions of this vehicle. That being the eye witness Jim Vruwink, Jr. He variously describes the vehicle as a burgundy G. M. product, two toned, you name it. Anything but a light colored Ford model!

A light colored Ford you say. Yes a light colored, or silverish Ford product we would say from reading all the various accounts is in fact what it was. If Mr. Vruwink had knowledge and was trying to mislead wouldn't it make sense he'd go in the opposite direction. It does to us. And if you closely read all the accounts, we would be surprised if it doesn't to you. Again a competent investigator, Mr. Rehrauer, seems to infer Mr. Vruwink was inconsistent, if not more, in his account of the car when in an interview of T J's auto mechanic Lonnie Grosskreutz on October 30, 1997. He asks Grosskreutz if James Vruwink was color blind. (92) Mr. Grosskreutz responds by saying he never noticed Mr. Vruwink to have "...a problem differentiating the color of cars." (93) If it wasn't tragic that exchange is almost comical. Clearly after two years of being on the case and methodically pursuing all leads Mr. Rehrauer was highly skeptical of Jim Vruwink's accounts of the striking vehicle and had noted inconsistencies.

Again while we could have gone in depth and footnoted all of this the Week's have presented Mr. Lowery with the detailed thoughts and facts on this 'car matter' and they should have them in their possession for examination. The long and the short of it is that we believe the striking vehicle

- was hid the night of the crime at either Eugene Feltz's place or Jim Vruwink Sr's farm.
- that it was later cut up and destroyed or buried on Jim Vruwink's Sr's property.
- that it was most likely a Ford product -- Taurus, Escort, etc., light in color, maybe silverish.

Related to this, we believe the Vruwink's have known all of this since day one, and that the former Wood County Sheriff was compromised due to his close relationship with the Vruwink's.

We can't prove this, at this time, but we believe we can put us in the ball park of which car was involved.

This information comes from some checks Mr Rehrauer did on vehicles. Those checks reveal that Tracy Stalter had on March 24, 1995 a 89 Ford VIN# IFABPOUKG212118. (94) This would, we believe, be the Tan or Chestnut Taurus Jim Jr. drove back to the scene of the crime. It would also be the car Mr. Rehrauer received information on in February 1997. That information related to the accident this vehicle was in Wisconsin Rapids before the homicide. (95) It could also be the Taurus she drove to

Appleton the next day when she stayed over night at a Holiday Inn Express. Interesting enough, however, she writes that that Taurus was silver. (96)

Could there have been two Taurus? Mr. Rehrauer's files indicate, yes. In addition to Ms. Stalter's 89 Taurus his files indicate Jim Vruwink Jr. had a '93 Ford Taurus 4 door - VIN# IFALP5244PG321469. This car's plates expired in May of 1995. (97). We wonder what became of this car?

Jim Jr., according to Rehrauer's records also had an 89 Ford Escort 2 door, VIN# IFAPP9198KW347514, license plate #MTZ270.

We wonder what color these cars were and whatever became of them. We also wonder why they were never even looked for by Wood County! Tom Vruwink would have clearly had access to them on the day of the crime!

With these vehicles being leading candidates for striking vehicle status let us theorize a bit again. Refer back to the original theory. Expanding on that we theorize in addition that --

The striking car could have been one of the one's we have just noted, or a vehicle they had acquired for their auto business. The prime reason, for not fessing up, in addition to human character defects was that Tom was drunk and they feared the consequences -- public humiliation and financial ruin.

Tom, after hiding the car at Feltz's and running to Marshfield to sober up returned to Jim's house and, as we have indicated in our previous theory worked at fine tuning the story with his brothers, Jim Jr. and Ron. There is also a chance the father and mother were involved in these discussions. They then put on the united front that Officers Kirst and Swayze fell for after 11:00 p.m. that night.

Sometime shortly thereafter they disposed of the car. The sheriff might have had knowledge of this.

Pretty bold theory we realize. While we can't prove it now, drugs may have been a factor in the coverup.. Wendy Day Vruwink, Tom's ex-wife has implied to the Week's that Tom dealt drugs on a regular basis and has given them a diary that seems to substantiate some of this. (98)

Now clearly she has an ax to grind. However, it does seem interesting that a sheriff who, to a certain extent, built his reputation on drug busting has for close friends people who are reputed drug users. Interesting enough, Tom's ex-wife also claims that the sheriff and Jim and Tom talked about the 'Deidre case' all the time. Now that, if true, is another conflict, a huge one.

We won't rely heavily on Ms. Day-Vruwink's word however because apparently in her divorce proceedings with Tom she was largely discredited. which certainly reflects on her, but also indicates the power of the Vruwink's. They are well connected.

The relationship with the ex-sheriff continues to this day. After his commitment and divorce he rented a house from Jim Vruwink.

In addition people have indicated to the Week's that when the ex-sheriff is in this area (he has recently lived in the Milwaukee area and in Florida) he stays at Jim Jr's house. Jim Jr's son Zach is purported to have been upset at being kicked out of his bedroom after the ex-sheriff had knee surgery because Illingworth was given the room to stay in. We highly question how a man with such a relationship could have conducted an unbiased investigation. In fact we would submit he didn't.

Bold claims we know, but let us give some possible examples of manipulation. Much earlier we wrote about two officers who were pulled from the case. The present sheriff, Kurt Heuer, and Officer Mark Gosh. Gosh, you will note was an officer who spoke with Jim Jr. on March 30, 1995. In that interview Jim Jr. described the suspect vehicle "...as a G.M. Celebrity or a Pontiac, dark in color." (99) The next day Lt. Levendoske tells Gosh "...that he was contacted by the Vruwinks and I was not to contact the Vruwinks and interview them any further." (100)

→ There is also a mysterious Beretta in Vruwink's

What amazing power! We wonder if the Vruwinks talked to their good friend Sheriff Illingworth and if he advised them on this. Don't know, but it is interesting that Jim's description of the car to Officer Gosh - is a dark G.M. product - much different than the other eye witnesses description of the car. And that Officer Gosh had knowledge of the Vruwink brothers concocting stories in a much earlier accident. What accident?

In September of 1984 Officer Gosh was at the scene of an accident involving Tom and among others Brian Rogney. Rogney claimed in a August 15, 1995 statement that Tom collided with him when "...Jim and Tom were racing." He further claims that "Tom left the scene running, leaving passengers in his vehicle that were injured. Tom and Jim had both been drinking." He caps this off by stating "during depositions with the insurance companies, Jim Vruwink told every lie he could think of to make the accident look like my fault. Needless to say he got caught in every lie, including lying under oath." (101)

Maybe this somewhat explains Officer Gosh's cryptic statement that "... over the years I have had my share of problems with the Vruwink family." (102) We understand, with this history, why the Vruwink's wouldn't want Gosh on the case. What we can't understand is a department that honored that wish!

Another example of possible manipulation. In July of 1997 the Week's got word that Jim's girl friend Tracy went to Appleton the weekend of the crime. Officer Reichert followed up on this lead and he got the information that Tracy stayed at a Holiday Inn Express. Tracy claimed to be driving an '89 Gray Taurus with no plates when she registered. (103) Officer Reichert closes his report by requesting "... that this be forwarded to S/A John Rehrauer of the Wisconsin Department of Justice for inclusion in his files." (104) Our research of D.C.I. information doesn't indicate that the usually thorough Rehrauer ever got this information. Could it have been intercepted? Sheriff Illingworth had just returned to duty at this time, and its possible he might not have wanted this to go further. In any event the information doesn't appear to have gotten to D.C.I.

There are a couple of examples of the possible manipulation. Our major point here is that the sheriff's actions are highly suspect, as is his breakdown. We don't see why he shouldn't be questioned on all of this, even at this late date. Something doesn't appear to be right.

Which brings us back to the cars? As we stated earlier **the key could be in the cars**. We believe we have already shown that the alibi is highly suspect. Early on we indicated how the times varied who was driving changed and most importantly how the purported meeting on the road was highly illogical. Retrace Yenters supposed route. It's non sensical! Much later we detailed direct refutations of the alibi by Mr. Dolens and Ms. Huber. The alibi is filled with holes. The cars then become the central point that should be focused on.

Certainly the Vruwink brothers should be asked about the cars. Jim's now wife Tracy, the sheriff, Yenter and Feltz should be questioned. Yenter it's interesting to note had to get a loan to buy the car from the Vruwinks at about the time of the homicide. But afterwards, as the previous investigator points out, he can buy three more without a loan. An amazing turn around for a man with limited funds (105)

We submit Faye Elliot should be brought in again as well, and probably many others. A John Doe investigation would certainly seem to be called for.

The long and the short of it is that Tom Vruwink's alibi has huge holes in it. Yenter who was with him, all of a sudden has cash to buy cars he never had before. Feltz who supports them stands up at Tom's wedding six years later. His brother Jim, who was the lone eye witness to the tragic event has a record of fabricating stories for Tom, and certainly his varied descriptions of the car and time frame might lead one to conclude he's doing it again.

Somehow something seems tragically wrong here.

Thus we urge the three parties this missive and evidence is being sent to to closely examine it. After doing so, we urge the Wood County D. A. to call a John Doe hearing. We would further ask that the state's Attorney General's office and D.C.I. be involved in oversight and that in the event charges are brought that a change of venue be granted.

Anecdotally we have heard of significant potential compromising circumstances within the Wood County D.A.'s office and in fact the entire courthouse.

We will not recite all of these here, lest we be perceived to be of the same stature as at least the first part of Wood County's investigation. For the sake of example, however, we will note that a present county judge, previously the county D. A. for the vast majority of the time while this investigation was going on Greg Potter has a brother, John M. Potter Jr. who is a convicted repeat drug offender.

We don't know that Judge Potter did anything criminally wrong while D.A. Anecdotally, primarily from Tom Vruwink's ex-wife (who we admit is a somewhat dubious witness) however stories have filtered through the community that D.A. departmental employees had a close social relationship with Vruwink family members. Also that the then D.A. and now judge may have hunted with and or had other social contact with the Vruwink's. Furthermore Ms. Day Vruwink states the county police are in possession of an extensive collection of newspaper articles pertaining to the case that she claims Tom accumulated.

In addition there are stories that John Potter Jr. may have used or purchased drugs from the Vruwink's. We have no proof of this. We have heard however that there are individuals who know of John Potter Jr's drug involvement with the Vruwink's

If this is in fact truth, then the then D.A. is extremely compromised. If the Vruwink's know incriminating information about the judge's brother and also maybe about his wife Laura, then there is reason to conclude he may not have pursued this investigation as vigorously as he should have.

Furthermore, we have heard that another judge Ed Zappen, Jr. counseled the then sheriff, Brian Illingworth, after his commitment in 1997. Zappen rightfully excluded himself from a case involving John Potter Jr. (106) and we don't believe he has done anything wrong. It is, however, evidence of the 'incestuous' nature of the Wood County Courthouse.

We will not be so generous in our comments about the former sheriff. While there is no smoking gun proof at this time (further reason for a John Doe) There is, as noted, throughout this document significant evidence to suggest his role in this affair may have been criminally compromised. Ms Day-Vruwink has made statements that Illingworth talked to Jim and Tom Vruwink repeatedly about this case while he was sheriff and after. David Week was once told by a county officer that the officer heard Illingworth say he would like to shoot Mr. Week. Plus David Week was also told that Tom Vruwink said the "hillbillies" (apparently the Weeks) will never catch us.

If true, these are extremely incriminating statements. The ex-sheriff should be called in this John Doe hearing, and he should be questioned thoroughly. To this day he maintains a close relationship with the Vruwink's. There is cause to believe he has knowledge of the truth about what happened on March 24, 1995.

That is enough for this document. We believe we have presented enough evidence to indicate that a John Doe probe is warranted. We ask that it be convened as soon as possible.

In the meantime we will continue to work on this case and any substantial new evidence will be forwarded on to the three parties this document is addressed to. We urge you to act responsibly, and to convene a John Doe post haste.

1. Why are Ron Vruwink's children not mentioned by name in his Obit BUT Brian Illingworth and Kevin Potter are??

2. Who was the second person with Jim Vruwink when he was arrested in Hurley for cocaine possession ?? Maybe his good friends the Potter's know ?? What say you Kevin??? How about Brian Illingworth?? Might he know ??

3. Interesting that the former Wood County Sheriff -- Brian Illingworth -- paid for the daily drug screenings for an addict Robert Leroy Dobson -- in Sterling, Colorado in 2012 -- so that he could stay out of jail. Why Brian ?? Because you're just a good hearted guy ?? Or maybe... Mr. Dobson had something on you .. Nahh.. that couldn't be the case ... could it ???

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domestic violence after a report of a loud disturbance.

A 2:23 a.m. Sunday report that one female assaulted another at the Citgo Service station is under investigation by Hurley police.

✓ A 37-year-old man was lodged in the Iron County jail after a report of drugs in a Hurley tavern.

Police arrested the man on cocaine possession and escape counts, according to the 2:37 a.m. Saturday report.

Iron County deputies assisted. Officers said the man was highly intoxicated when he was taken into custody.

Iron County, Wis.

Iron County deputies issued at least eight snowmobile citations over the weekend. Most were for machines that were illegally operated on private property or trespassing. Hurley police also ticketed many snowmobilers.

ACCIDENTS

City of Ironwood

Scott Peterson, of Scott Street, reported hit-run damage to his mail-

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STATE OF WISCONSIN

CIRCUIT COURT

IRON COUNTY

STATE OF WISCONSIN,

Plaintiff,

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT
AND SUMMONS

vs.

JAMES L. VRUWINK
7656 County Trunk HH
Arpin, WI 54410

FILED Case No. 02-CF-08
IRON COUNTY, WI

FEB 01 2002

M/W DOB: 02/17/1964,

CIRCUIT COURT
Defendant. VIRGINIA GIACOMINO, CLERK

Officer Chris Colassaco being first duly sworn on oath, alleges on information, belief and personal knowledge that on or about January 19, 2002, in the City of Hurley, County of Iron and State of Wisconsin, the above-named Defendant, James L. Vruwink, did:

COUNT I: Delivery of a Controlled Substance, to-wit:
Cocaine: Unlawfully deliver a Schedule 2, non-narcotic controlled substance, to-wit: cocaine, in an amount of 5 grams or less contrary to Section 961.41(1)(cm)1 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

PENALTY: An unclassified Felony pursuant to Section 961.41(1)(cm)1 of the Wisconsin Statutes for which the maximum penalty is a fine not to exceed \$500,000 or imprisonment for not more than fifteen (15) years, or both. Further, upon conviction, the Defendant's operating privileges, as defined in §340.01(40) shall be suspended or revoked for not less than six (6) months nor more than five (5) years, pursuant to Section 961.50(1) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

COUNT II: Escape: As a person in custody who intentionally escapes from custody pursuant to a legal arrest for committing a crime contrary to Section 946.42(3)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

PENALTY: A Class D Felony pursuant to Section 946.42(3)(a) of the Wisconsin Statutes for which the maximum

penalty is a fine not to exceed \$10,000 or imprisonment not to exceed ten (10) years or both, pursuant to Section 939.50(3)(d) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

COUNT III: Possession of Cocaine: Knowingly and unlawfully possess a schedule 2, non-narcotic controlled substance, to-wit: cocaine, contrary to Section 961.41(3g)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

PENALTY: An unclassified Misdemeanor pursuant to Section 961.41(3g)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes for which the maximum penalty is a fine of not more than \$5,000 and may be imprisoned for not more than one (1) year in the county jail, or both. Further, upon conviction, the Defendant's operating privileges, as defined in §340.01(40) shall be suspended or revoked for not less than six (6) months nor more than five (5) years, pursuant to Section 961.50(1) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Your complainant prays that said Defendant be dealt with according to law, and the basis of your complainant's charge of such offense is as follows:

Your complainant is a Police Officer employed by the City of Hurley Police Department, Hurley, Wisconsin and as such his information is deemed reliable. This complaint is also based upon information received from City of Hurley Police Officer Donald Packmayer and Iron County Deputy Sheriff Paul Samardich, fellow law enforcement officers whose information was acquired during the course of their official duties and is therefore deemed reliable.

This complaint is also based on the statements of Penny Becerra and Lisa Marie Moloney, citizen witnesses of crime in this matter whose information is deemed reliable.

Your complainant states that on January 19, 2002, at approximately 1:20 a.m., complainant and Officer Packmayer were dispatched to the Silver Dollar Saloon in the City of Hurley, and met with the owner, Bob Gellatly. Bob stated that there were two males inside the Silver Dollar Saloon that had coke on them. Bob also stated that Penny, a dancer, was attempting to keep them occupied until the officers arrived. Officer Packmayer and complainant entered the bar and immediately saw Penny and the two gentlemen. Complainant pulled Penny aside and asked her what was going on. Penny stated the bigger of the two men offered her some coke and showed her what 'he' called an "eight-ball". Penny also stated the bigger gentleman had offered some coke to another dancer by the name of Lisa. As complainant finished talking to Penny, he

observed the bigger male, later identified as James L. Vruwink, reach into his right pocket and then put that hand under the table. Complainant immediately asked the two males to step outside. They agreed and complainant followed them out the door. Outside, complainant immediately asked James Vruwink if he had anything on him that he should not have. Vruwink stated "No." Complainant asked if he could look and Vruwink stated "Yes." Complainant checked all his pockets and found nothing. Complainant asked Deputy Paul Samardich to assist watching Vruwink while complainant went back inside the bar. Officer Packmayer was dealing with the other male subject. Complainant went back into the bar and on the floor right next to where James Vruwink put his hand under the table, was a vial with a white powder substance in it. Complainant spoke with dancers, Penny and Lisa Moloney. Lisa stated that the vial complainant found was the one that Vruwink had handed her in the bar. Complainant listened to the rest of their statements and attempted to locate the bindle both females described. Complainant was unable to find it. Complainant asked both females to come to the Iron County Sheriff's Office to write out statements.

Complainant exited the bar and Deputy Samardich informed him that he put James Vruwink in the back seat of his squad car because it was so cold. Complainant opened the door and showed Vruwink the vial with the white powder. Complainant asked him if he had seen this before. James stated, "I have never seen that before." Complainant then told James Vruwink that he was under arrest for possession of what complainant believed to be a controlled substance. Complainant then closed the door to the squad car.

Complainant walked to his squad car where Officer Packmayer had placed the other male subject. Complainant started to talk to him when he heard Deputy Samardich yelling. Complainant looked up and saw Deputy Samardich and Officer Packmayer running up the street. James Vruwink had gotten out of Deputy Samardich's squad and was running south on 1st Avenue. Complainant got into his squad and started after Vruwink and the officers. In about a minute, Deputy Samardich radioed that they had the male subject in custody again by 2nd Avenue. Deputy Samardich then transported James Vruwink to the Iron County Sheriff's Department.

At the Sheriff's Department complainant field tested the white powder with a Narco pouch 904B. Reagent for cocaine salts and base. This field tested positive for cocaine.

Statement of Penny Becerra dated January 19, 2002: "I, Penny Becerra was approached by a dancer named Lori about a drug deal.

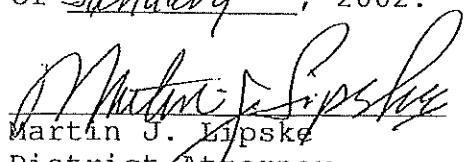
He told & showed her that we could do a line here & she said I gotta go & moved on. I went right to Bob Gellatly, the owner & said call the cops now & went back to the 2 guys. I did the best I could to keep them there. They bought me a couple shots of pucker & that was to sub-side their time to see what they had to offer. Then shortly, the heavy set man offered me "coke" & asked if I wanted "some. I never said no & yes. I just shyed away & played dumb." "He then showed me the "coke" & I asked what all do you have? He said, I have an 8 ball on me." "The cops came & asked to talk to me. I then told them they have "coke" & it is in his right pocket. I pointed him out & stood by the door." "They 'cops' took him out & then the cops came back in & found a vile of 'coke'."

Statement of Lisa Marie Moloney: "About 1-1:30 a.m. I was approached by a customer at the Silver Dollar Saloon (where I'm working). He placed a yellowish tinted vial in my hand which had a white powder in it which he told me was coke-cocaine. I handed it right back to him. He then pulled out a package of the white powder and offered to lay a line out for me. I told him I couldn't do that in the bar and he said if I'd come to his room he'd give me a 1/4 ounce of coke for sex. I told him I'd be right back to talk to him and went and told Penny (my boss). The package he went to lay the line out with was a white folded package. I can't remember his exact clothing, but he's big, stocky, dark hair and his jaw kept moving back and forth. You could see he was very high."



Chris Colassaco, Complainant

Subscribed and sworn to
before me this 31st day
of January, 2002.



Martin J. Lipske
District Attorney
State Bar No. 1008584

APPROVED FOR FILING:



Martin J. Lipske
District Attorney
State Bar No. 1008584

Logan County Jail inmate alleging medical mistreatment from staff

By David Martinez Journal-Advocate staff writer Journal Advocate
Posted:

Journal-
Advocate.com

STERLING -- Robert Leroy Dobson had his bond reinstated Thursday in Logan County District Court, after he was granted a hearing last week.

Dobson, who was in the Logan County Jail after failing a urinary analysis (UA) while on supervised bond, had originally requested a hearing to transfer to another facility after he complained that he wasn't receiving the treatment he needed for his mental and medical conditions.

That request was denied, but the second motion was granted to discuss the bond conditions.

Judge Michael Singer took the place of Judge Charles Hobbs in presiding over the hearing, as it had been expedited due to the perceived emergency nature of Dobson's situation, according to court sources.

The court discovered that Dobson's original \$3,000 bond had been revoked when he was arrested July 18 and had not been reinstated. But Singer gave Dobson the option to reset the assurety bond, which would cost him about \$450 if his bondsmen agreed to post, or to pay a \$450 cash bond, which would give him cash back if he didn't violate his UAs. He could also pay Sterling's Centennial Mental Health \$200 up front out of that bond to pay for the UAs, should he not have money to afford them.

Regardless, Singer said Dobson would have to submit to a UA every day available between the time he posts bond and his sentencing hearing Sept. 5.

"I really think we're going to get through it," said Beverly Dobson, Robert Dobson's daughter. She had told the court he could stay with her in her home, where she imposes a 9:30 p.m. curfew. She also said she would report Robert should he start using meth again.

"It's hard. But I want him to help himself. It's the hardest thing when it comes to (Robert), because it's an ongoing thing."

The Public Defender's Office had come ready to talk about the details surrounding Dobson's medical treatment in jail, but Singer wasted no time in clarifying the court's role in that aspect of Dobson's case.

"I don't govern the jail. That's not my job," Singer said. "I cannot help (Dobson) with his medical conditions, as much as I might like to... It's not my job (to do that)."

Public Defender Garen Gervey, who stood in for Stacey Shobe Thursday, disagreed, and he and Singer spent several minutes discussing whether the details of the defendant's medical situation were relevant to the hearing. Gervey said the court had a duty to step in if it saw a violation of the law, which in this case would apply to the Eighth Amendment's barring of cruel and unusual punishment.

The court has to follow Colorado statutes, he added, which include the withholding of medical treatment in jail as a violation of a person's rights.

"If the court isn't authorized to ensure adequate food and care, the legislature would have not passed the ordinance," he said.

"If what's been relayed to me is remotely accurate, there's a serious problem here."

Singer said he didn't want to sound unsympathetic, but that he wanted to uphold the separation of powers. He would have had the power to enforce the statute in a civil case, but not in a criminal case.

"The problem is context," Singer said. "He isn't represented in a civil capacity. If you want to bring a civil case, that's fine."

Sheriff Brett Powell wouldn't comment on the medical issues in question in the case due to allegations of a civil suit, but he thinks highly of the medical staff and thinks the court followed the rule of law.

"I think our medical staff is top notch," he said. "They go above and beyond what they're supposed to do."

Deputy District Attorney Zack Balkin objected to a reduction of Dobson's bond before the court discovered his bond was revoked, but he warned the court that Dobson had already pleaded guilty in his case (on a possession of methamphetamine charge). He's already facing a Department of Corrections or Community Corrections sentence on his charges.

"I don't think there's a protection we can set up to make sure he won't use again," Balkin said.

The court denied Balkin's request for GPS monitoring, noting Dobson's money situation. Though Dobson agreed to live with his daughter, Beverly, should he post bond, he would have no job to go back to; he was homeless when he was originally arrested in late March, and continues to battle addiction issues.

Plus, Singer noted, Dobson was originally arrested while riding his bike early one morning, weaving in the street.

"I don't think he's going to take a bike to California or Arkansas," he said. "If he makes a bad choice to party, he goes back into custody."

But getting Robert Dobson out of jail won't be easy on everyone. Beverly said she had to pay the \$240 to Centennial Mental Health (\$40 of it to get his intake to get him into mental health counseling) and the \$250 to the jail out of her pocket, as the jail couldn't accept another consent assurity from Robert's bondsman. The bondsman had allegedly said he was okay writing another one, but the jail couldn't take it because the initial \$3,000 bond had been revoked.

He does have some help for his UAs, though.

 Brian Illingworth, a former Wisconsin sheriff and friend of Dobson's, will write a check Sunday for \$300 to pay for the daily screenings. Dobson will receive another \$175 from his last payment from Aid to the Needy and Disabled, which cut off due to his jail time.

He will be released on Monday.

Sheriff faces troubling times

THE REVELATION that Wood County Sheriff Brian Illingworth has been hospitalized for depression and drug dependency shocked and surprised a lot of constituents this week. And it has raised some troubling questions.

Supposedly, not even members of the Sheriff & Traffic Committee, which oversees the operations of the Sheriff's Department, were aware of his condition until a brief press release was circulated Wednesday morning. The release supposedly was given at the request of Illingworth. That is troubling.

It is comforting to know that Undersheriff Randall Rapp has assumed management of the department since Illingworth's hospitalization began March 17. But who made that appointment? And when? And who was told? Were any county officials or members of the Sheriff's Department advised of the reasons for Illingworth's absence? And who made the decision to keep the facts under cover until reporters started asking questions on where the sheriff was?

WHILE WE CAN appreciate the "personal nature" of his illness, serious questions could be raised about Illingworth's ability to perform his duties before he took the leave. These conditions didn't just pop up overnight. Was his job performance impaired before his leave began?

One has to wonder what prompted the hospitalization and at whose request. Did he admit himself? Where is he receiving treatment, for what period of time?

The press release contained little information, other than to say that he "was making good progress" and that he was expected to return to office at some unspecified time.

THAT, TOO, IS a troubling prospect. An armed sheriff managing a sizable department that oversees the safety and security of all county residents needs to be performing at peak levels.

Will there be some medical evaluation after his treatment that will give him a clean bill of health to resume his duties? Will there be followup evaluations? Is there the possibility of a medical disability release

from duties?

It doesn't seem enough to just say "I'm cured" and to go back to life as normal. There is the possibility of a relapse in these types of cases.

WE HAVE SEEN no evidence of medical problems since Illingworth was first elected sheriff in 1989. Without question, however, this job is laced with a lot of stress in dealing with a variety of criminal activities, playing public relations, and managing a major county department.

Illingworth found himself in the middle of a controversy in the department's investigation of the death of a young girl in an auto accident near her home. And more recently, he was challenged about the private use of a Sheriff's Department vehicle which led the County Board to establish some new use policies.

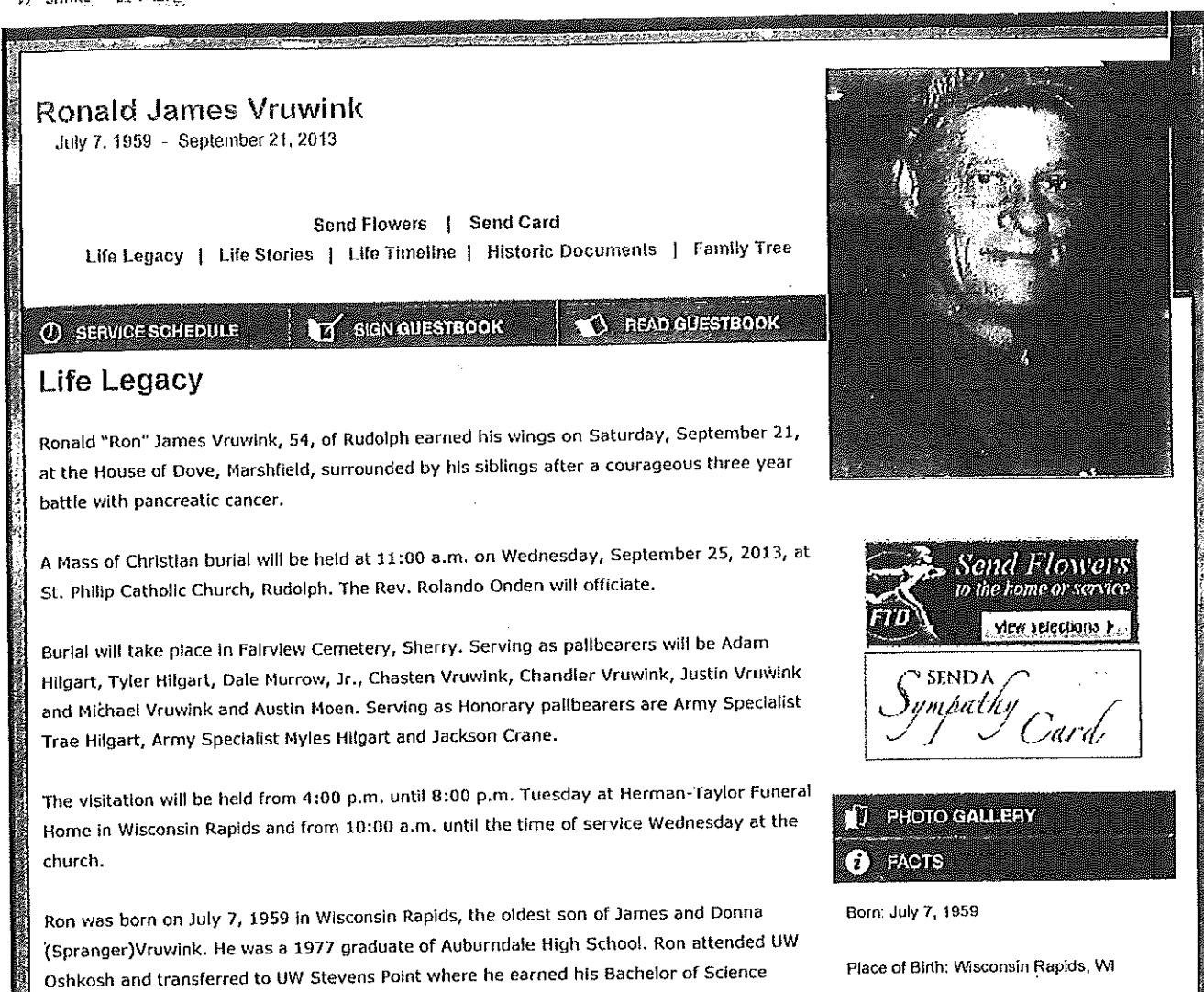
Yet in the last election, he won an uncontested race which would indicate that both the department and the public were satisfied with his performance. He has been a visible and active sheriff.

ILLINGWORTH, 50, worked as a management trainee at the old Woolworth's store in Marshfield and as an advertising representative in Wisconsin Rapids before beginning his law enforcement career as a part-time officer in Port Edwards. He served the Wood County department as a deputy, dispatcher, and patrol and drug investigator before seeking the sheriff's duties.

We are encouraged by the fact that he is receiving help and wish him a speedy recovery. Had he been in any other line of work, other than as an elected public official, he could have received treatment anonymously and few would have been the wiser.

Yet the issues raised in his case must now be addressed in a public and timely manner. Had the facts been on the table from the start — that he was on a medical leave — things might have been a lot easier to deal with after his release.

That, unfortunately, is no longer possible. The weeks-long secrecy of his condition has changed the rules and will put his performance under the microscope if he indeed decides to resume his duties.



The visitation will be held from 4:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Tuesday at Herman-Taylor Funeral Home in Wisconsin Rapids and from 10:00 a.m. until the time of service Wednesday at the church.

Ron was born on July 7, 1959 in Wisconsin Rapids, the oldest son of James and Donna (Spranger)Vruwink. He was a 1977 graduate of Auburndale High School. Ron attended UW Oshkosh and transferred to UW Stevens Point where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree. While attending college Ron worked as a sales representative at G&K Services and as a bartender at the "Brig", to help put himself through college. Ron also worked for a small vending company in WI Rapids. In addition, he owned and operated his own recreation business, which allowed him to enjoy the great outdoors, especially "up North at his house in Hurley". Ron loved to bring family and friends to Hurley to snowmobile, but he truly enjoyed the peace being there brought him.

Ron loved family and time spent with them, especially his nephews and nieces. He was the "pied piper" to the children of his brothers and sisters and many friends.

Ron was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in September 2010. He traveled to University Southern California in October 2010 to have an extensive cancer surgery. He also traveled numerous times to MD Anderson in Houston, TX for specialized cancer treatment. Ron was divorced in 2012. He fought his battle with cancer courageously and fiercely, never giving up. His tireless effort to live life to the fullest was an inspiration to all who traveled this journey with him, including his Dad, brothers and sisters and close friends. This journey was made possible with Ron's strong Catholic faith and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This past July, Ron's parish hosted a cancer benefit. He enjoyed seeing so many of his friends. He was overjoyed by the outpouring of love and support shown to him. He was truly

This memorial provided by:
Herman-Taylor Funeral Home and
Cremation Center

Born: July 7, 1959

Place of Birth: Wisconsin Rapids, WI

Death: September 21, 2013

Place of Death: Marshfield, WI

thankful for the generosity of so many.

Besides his faith and family, Ron loved a good debate over politics. He was a proud democrat, but believed it was the person running, not the political party. He helped candidates of both parties get elected to many local, state and national offices.

A special thanks to the House of Dove, St. Philips Parish and especially Joe & Carol Haupt, Bill & Janice Haupt and Douglas Haupt family, Elmer & Diane Neises and Brian Illingworth.

Ron was a true people person, he loved meeting and making new friends wherever he went. He once was quoted in a newspaper interview about his bartending job, "the best part of the job is socializing, I enjoy people". Ron was a strong man who had a large, loving heart. He would do anything for anyone. He was a protective big brother, an adventurous Uncle, a loving and compassionate Son and a trustworthy, loyal friend to many.

Ron is survived by his father, James T. Vruwink (Milladore); grandmother, Mabel Spranger; Siblings: Judy(Dale) Murrow, Sr., Austin, TX, Jane(Tom)Hilgart, Auburndale, Doug Vruwink, Milladore, Jim(Tracy)Vruwink, Tom(Tami Coombs)Vruwink, all of Wisconsin Rapids, Amy Sue (Matt Crane)Vruwink of Milladore, and Cindy Will, Dallas, Texas; five children and six grandchildren; nieces and nephews: Adam(Tanya), Tyler(Amanda), Myles and Trae Hilgart, Dale Jr. and Jade Murrow, Katheryn Vruwink, Zach, Brit, Danielle(Logan), Justin, Lexi and Michael Vruwink, Chelsey, Carissa, Chasten and Chandler Vruwink, Kennedy Mae and Jackson Crane; and special friends: Greg & Lisa Moen, John Weis and Kevin Potter.

Ron is preceded in death by his mother, Donna Mae Vruwink; grandfather, Harvey Spranger; grandparents, Ira & Florence Vruwink; uncles: Don, Lewis, and Edward Vruwink, Jerome Schenk and James Mertes; aunts: Inga Vruwink, Betty Vruwink and Shirley Vruwink; and cousin, Forrest Vruwink.

When Ron earned his wings, he took a piece of our hearts with him, but we know he is at peace now and with our Mom.

A memorial will be established at a later date in Ron's name.

Herman-Taylor Funeral Home of Wisconsin Rapids is handling the arrangements.
Condolences may be sent online to www.taylorfuneralhome.net.

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